

March 3, 2022

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support for Bill # 5283 which secures equal funding for agricultural education.

I am the parent of a freshman at Wamogo High School enrolled in the agricultural program. My daughter has always been interested in agriculture and is reaching to obtain a career in an agriculture pathway. This program has helped my reserved, anxious daughter grow in so many ways, and we aren't even done with her first year. She really is a different child. Her confidence is soaring and the friendships she has made, with like minded kids, has been nothing short of amazing for her.

If more kids had the opportunity to pursue an agricultural education, without the limited number of kids dictated by sending towns, I truly feel they would be as successful as my 14 year old.

Hands on learning is so important. Studies show kids retain information when they actually DO the thing instead of sitting and listening to a description. Especially with the state of the world currently, it is important to teach sustainability and homesteading skills. With college becoming more and more unreachable for low and middle class, having these skills sets up the next generation to pursue entrepreneurship and careers that do not require a college degree. (Agricultural schools have certification programs that help some students be certified so they may find a career right after high school.)

Please, increase Agricultural Education funding and eliminate the tuition requirement for sending towns so more students can be apart of an agricultural community and have their right to choose unrestricted.

Thank you for reading my email.

Sincerely,

Kelly J. Duff

Region 6, Wamogo